

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 EUR-25 IO-14 OMB-01 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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INFO USINT ALGIERS PRIORITY

USINT CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0171

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: QADHAFI'S CHALLENGE TO ARAB NEIGHBORS

1. COLONEL QADHAFI'S FIRST PUBLIC SPEECH SINCE TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNITY DECLARATION AND SINCE HIS SPUR-OF-THE MOMENT MEETING IN GENEVA WITH BOURGUIBA WAS GIVEN AFTER HE DISTRIBUTED FORMER ITALIAN FARMS TO 600 LIBYANS ON FEB 10 AT AIN ZARAH, ANNIVERSARY OF THE LOCALE FOR 1911 BATTLE AGAINST INVADING ITALIAN FORCES. (TEXT IN FBIS)

2. QADHAFI SAID WHAT WAS ON HIS MIND TO RELATIVELY SMALL AUDIENCE OF FARMERS, DIPLOMATS, AFRICAN OIL CONFERENCE DELEGATES AND A PARTY OF VISITING TUNISIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS. HE DECLARED IN CHALLENGING TERMS LIBYA'S DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE ON ITS CURRENT COURSE--THE HIGH ROAD TO ARAB UNITY AND GOVT BY THE PEOPLE. HE HAD NOTHING BUT CRITICISM FOR ALL NEIGHBORING ARAB REGIMES, AND MADE CLEAR HIS CONVICTION THAT ONLY LIBYA WAS ON THE RIGHT AND TRUE ROAD.

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3. HE CONFIDENTLY PREDICTED THAT TIME WOULD BE ON THE SIDE

OF LIBYA. WHILE OTHER ARABS MIGHT BACKSLIDE, LIBYA WOULD STAND FIRM. IN EFFECT HE WENT OVER HEADS OF ARAB GOVTS IN AFRICA IN CALLING FOR POPULAR SUPPORT FOR UNIONISTS IN THESE COUNTRIES SHARING LIBYAN PRINCIPLES. CONTRARY TO EARLY BBC REPORT, HE DID NOT OFFER TO ARM POTENTIAL DISSIDENTS FROM NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES.

4. POTENTIAL UNION PARTNER TUNISIA SURELY HEADED LINE OF TARGETS. QADHAFI WAS EMPHATIC TO POINT OF ANGER IN COMPARING PRODUCTIVE AND WHOLESOME ROLE OF LIBYAN WOMEN WITH THAT OF OTHERS WHO WERE OFFERED TO FOREIGN TOURISTS. IN THIS PHASE OF ITS QUEST FOR ARAB UNITY AND POPULAR RULE QADHAFI'S LIBYA IS DEFIANTLY AWARE OF ITS ISOLATION. NO DEGREE OF DISILLUSION, HOWEVER, IS LIKELY TO PROVOKE QADHAFI INTO BEING THE ONE TO BREAK OFF TUNISIAN-LIBYAN ENGAGEMENT.
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